



Local Solar Advisory Committee
Thursday, August 2 from 6:30-8:30 PM
Austin Energy, Town Lake Center Assembly Room 130
721 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, Texas

Regular Meeting Minutes

Call to Order – Steve Wiese called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

Committee Members in Attendance: Steve Wiese, Stan Pipkin, Christine Herbert, Michael Kuhn, Colin Meehan, John Sutton, Gabe Flores, Sal Valdez, Mark Begert, Roger Wood, Tom “Smitty” Smith, Tuan Q. Pham, Jose Beceiro, Gary “Bernie” Bernfeld, Sunshine Mathon
Present on phone - Varun Rai, Monica de la Rosa

1. Approval of minutes from July 26, 2012 meeting of the Local Solar Advisory Committee.
Christine Herbert made a motion to approve minutes. Second by Colin Meehan.

2. Discussion/Vote on Recommendation to Council for FY2013 Program Budget

- a. Members of the Budget Working Group presented on the process and rationale for their proposed recommendation to council - a target of approximately 10 MW of new capacity based on an allocation of \$5.7 million for FY 2013, \$5 million for residential and \$720,000 for commercial.
- b. Colin Meehan moved to place the proposed recommendation on the table for discussion. Seconded by Mark Begert. Committee members discussed the proposed recommendation.
 - i. Michael Kuhn moved to replace the breakdown of numbers in the proposal with a text amendment: “The LSAC recommends that council plan on a minimum budget of \$5.7 million to support fiscal year 2013 commitments.” Colin Meehan seconded.
 1. Mark Begert moved to add to the text amendment, specifying a \$5 million allocation to residential and \$720,000 for commercial. Roger seconded. Motion was put to a vote and failed, 6 for, 8 against.
 - ii. John Sutton proposed to add to the text amendment: “We anticipate this budget will result in 10 MW of new capacity.” Tuan Pham seconded. Motion was put to a vote and was approved, 8 for, 7 against.
 - iii. Sunshine Mathon proposed an amendment to the last sentence of text: “This committee also supports the development of new programs or approaches to solar that address underserved customers such as low income, renters, tenants, non-profits, and those without sufficient access to financing.” Colin Meehan seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.
 - iv. Michael Osborne from Austin Energy stated that the recommended budget allocation of \$5.7 million was dishonest and looked like a trick because it did not reflect the true cost of adding 10 MW by not showing PBI costs beyond FY13. Members of the budget working group said there was no intent to be dishonest, they had also calculated and considered the NPV of those PBI commitments but presented the budget recommendation in a way that matched Austin Energy’s presentation of their fiscal year budget.
 - v. The Committee voted on the text amendment put forth by Michael Kuhn. The motion failed, 4 for, 10 against.

- c. Christine moved to place the following recommendation on the table: “The LSAC recommends a FY13 budget that accurately reflects current demand and historical spending, that the solar incentive budget be increased to \$10 million, and that this committee will bring recommendations to improve the cost effectiveness of the programs.” Bernie Bernfeld seconded.
 - i. Bernie moved to amend Christine’s recommendation. “Moreover we ask the City to move budget items on AE’s budget for non-utility related City expenses off of AE’s books to the City’s general fund to provide the ability for AE to pay for this increased allocation of its own budget.” Colin seconded. Motion was put to a voice vote and failed.
 - ii. Christine’s motion was put to a vote. Motion was passed with 11 for, 3 against, and one abstaining. Steve asked dissenters to write alternative viewpoint and pass it to Steve so that he could share with council.

3. Expectations for Upcoming Meetings

a. First draft for working group reports

Steve reminded the committee that these do not need to be extensive at this point, just to reflect the progress of the working groups so far. Soon thereafter, the working group leaders will begin to meet in order to piece the document together.

b. Best Practice Review

Pecan Street will be delivering the Best Practice Review and will give to Sunshine for posting on the website as soon as it is complete.

4. Official Request for data from Austin Energy

- a. Stan Pipkin presented a request to Austin Energy for a map of existing and planned solar installations in Austin. The purpose was to get the committee’s blessing before forwarding the request to Austin Energy. Stan moved that the request be approved by the committee and forwarded to Austin Energy. Colin Meehan seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

5. Adjournment – 8:25 pm